

The Feast of the Holy Trinity
St. John 3:1-15
June 15th, 2025
St. Titus Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Athens, GA
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Even So Must the Son of Man Be Lifted Up

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty and Everlasting God Who hast taught us to know and to confess in true faith that in three Persons of equal power and glory Thou art One True and Everlasting God and to be worshiped as such: We beseech Thee, keep us at all times steadfast in this faith against whatsoever may assail us, O Thou, Who livest and reignest, ever, One True God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, in Numbers six, the Lord God tells Moses to give instructions to Aaron, the high priest. Aaron was to bless the people with words that the Lord God gave him to bless the people. Those words are how our Divine Service ends: “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” The Lord tells Moses, and Aaron, and the people of Israel, that the reason for giving this blessing upon the people was to “place His Name upon them.” When they received this blessing, the Lord God, through the high priest, was placing His Name upon the people of Israel. He was making them His people by giving them this blessing.

This is why we conclude our Divine Service with these words. We leave this Service—we conclude worship—by going in peace with the Lord God’s Name upon us. By these words, He has declared to us that we are His people. By faith in these words of blessing, we declare that He is our only True God. By faith, we believe and confess that the words of the blessing give us what they declare: that the Lord God has placed His Name upon us. And because He has placed His Name upon us, we have all the benefits that are given in this blessing. We have His blessing, He keeps and preserves us from harm and danger, His face shines upon us (meaning that He looks upon us and does not see any sin, but only the righteousness in which we are clothed). He is gracious to us, readily forgiving us our trespasses, and He lifts His countenance upon us, again turning His face toward us instead of away from us, and by all these things, we are at peace with the Lord God.

The Name of the “Lord” is repeated three times. In the Hebrew the word we translate “Lord”, or

“Jehovah” in some translations, is the tetragrammaton. It is the four-letter Name of the True Lord God: Yahweh. This Name, Yahweh, the Lord’s Name, is repeated three times. It is placed upon the children of Israel three times. Already in the Old Testament, our Triune Lord God is revealing Himself to be One God in Three Persons. We conclude our worship with the Name of the Triune Lord God placed upon us three times. He declares us to be His children, and with His Name upon us He is our Father and Lord God.

Our Divine Service ends with a blessing, but it also begins with a blessing. The Minister at the beginning of the Service turns toward the people and blesses them with the words of the Invocation. These words are not meant to be a personal devotion of the Minister and the people. They are not meant to only be a remembrance of the Name placed upon us in the waters of Holy Baptism. They are a blessing from the Triune Lord God, by the Minister, upon the people. We begin our Divine Service by the Minister placing the Triune Name of the Lord God upon us His people. From the very beginning of the Divine Service, our Triune Lord God places His Name upon us. He declares at the very start, that He is our Triune Lord God, and we are His people. We are His children, and He is our Father and Triune Lord God.

The whole Divine Liturgy throughout declares the Triune Name of the Lord God. When the Name is mentioned, or there is a part that is repeated three times, it is an allusion to the Triune Name of the Lord God. It is our reminder throughout the Service that we are the people of the Lord God. It is our reminder that He has placed His Name upon us, and therefore, we have every right to come before Him and worship Him, and receive His gifts and benefits that He delivers to us through the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God, and the Blessed Sacraments instituted by the Lord Christ Himself. When we hear His Name, or hear things being repeated three times, it is our reminder that our Triune Lord God desires to shine His face upon us, and be gracious unto us, and lift up His countenance upon us. For when He does these things for us, we have peace with Him. We have peace with Him because He has covered over our transgressions with the blood of the Lord + Jesus, the Christ.

This is why He can place His Name upon us. The Son of God was lifted up on the tree of the holy cross just as the serpent in the wilderness was lifted up by Moses in the desert. The people of Israel had sinned by complaining against the bread of Heaven, manna. They said they loathed this “light bread.” Therefore, the Lord God sent serpents into the midst of the people of Israel so that when they were bit by the serpents, they would die. They then came to Moses and confessed their sin, and the Lord God commanded Moses to build a bronze serpent and place it on a standard, so that anyone who was bit by a serpent might not die. It was not the bronze serpent that saved them, but it was faith in the command and promise of the Lord God that saved them.

Our Lord + Jesus was also lifted up. He was lifted up on the tree of the holy cross. Unlike the bronze serpent, His lifting up paid the penalty of sin for all mankind. His death atoned for the sins of the whole world. But His cross—His crucifixion—does not save mankind simply because He atoned for their sins. It is faith that justifies. Those who in faith trust in the promises won for us by the Lord’s suffering and death, have the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation that He won on the cross. Our Triune Lord God takes this even a step further, for He imparts the benefits won upon the cross through the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God, and the Blessed Sacraments. We receive the remission of our sins through hearing and believing the Word of the Gospel of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. We have the remission of our sins when we participate in the Blessed Sacraments of Holy Baptism, the Absolution, and the Lord’s Supper.

For in these Sacraments, we are connected to the lifting up of our Lord + Jesus upon the tree of the holy cross. The Old Adam is killed and drowned in the waters of Holy Baptism, we are buried with the Christ, so that just as He is raised again from the dead, we too now walk in newness of life. We are a new creation—we have been born anew—we are born of the Spirit. He has placed His holy Name

upon us so that we are declared to be the children of the Triune Lord God. This is also declared to us in the Absolution. For our sins are declared forgiven by the Minister for the sake of the crucifixion and death of our Lord + Jesus. We are declared forgiven because the Triune Lord God has placed His Name upon us. So that, all who truly repent and are sorry for their sins, receive the forgiveness of the Lord God. It is also by the holy cross that we receive the true and substantial Body and Blood of our Lord + Jesus in, with, and under bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. We receive that which He offered up freely, and innocently, upon the tree of the holy cross, so that when we eat His Body and drink His Blood in this Sacrament, we receive, through faith, the remission of all our sins.

We receive all of this because our Triune Lord God has placed His Name upon us. In Fourth Book of Moses, commonly called Numbers, the Lord commanded Moses to command Aaron, the high priest, to bless the people of Israel with His Name, thereby declaring them to be His people. Through faith in this blessing, they claimed the Lord God as their only True God. The blessing for the people of the Old Testament had the Lord's Name—Yahweh—repeated three times. This revealed that Lord God is One God in Three Persons. Howbeit, the Names of the Three Persons was not revealed.

That was reserved for the coming of the Lord + Jesus. It was reserved for when the Lord God took upon Himself our flesh and dwelt among us. Our Lord + Jesus, on the day of His ascension, gave command to the Apostles to go into all the world and teach them all the things that He had taught them, and to baptize all nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. We who have been born anew—born of the Spirit—in this New Testament generation, have received the blessing of the Names of each Person of the Holy Trinity.

It is this Name, the Triune Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which is placed upon us at the beginning of the Divine Service. We are blessed by the Minister with the Triune Name at the beginning of the Service, and He blesses us again when we conclude our worship with the Lord's Name as we go out into the world. We come into the Lord's presence bearing His Name, and we go out from the Lord's presence bearing His Name. Indeed, my dear friends, we bear that Name with us wherever we go.

We are encouraged in the Small Catechism, by Doctor Martin Luther to rise each morning and go to bed each night by making the sign of the holy cross. We begin and end each day by reminding ourselves that the Triune Lord God has placed His holy Name upon us. He has declared us to be His own dear children—His own dear people—and when we make the sign of the holy cross, and repeat the Triune Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the Name placed upon us through Holy Baptism, we are declaring that He is our One and Only True Lord God.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us make the sign of the holy cross often. For in doing so we remind ourselves Whose we are. We are the Triune Lord God's people. And because we are His people, because we are His very own dear children, He blesses us with His face and countenance. He looks upon us as His own redeemed and forgiven children. We have exactly what He declares to us: we are His people, and He is our very own dear Triune Lord God.

So then, let us rejoice on this Feast Day of the Holy Trinity. For we have a Triune Lord God Who has declared us to be His; He has declared us to be forgiven and redeemed by the lifting up of the Lord + Jesus upon the holy cross. We have His Name upon us through the waters of Holy Baptism, and we are His own dear people. Thanks be to the Father and the to the Son and to the Holy Ghost for being our own dear Triune Lord God. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of

the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!